BLACKBIRD FOR TRAINING

Achieving Performance Excellence through Benchmarking

28 December 2026 – 1 January 2027
Amsterdam (Netherlands)



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Introduction

A key element of continuous improvement is benchmarking. Without benchmarking, organizations cannot gauge how competitive they are or identify where to focus their improvement efforts. Benchmarking helps organizations balance internal problem-solving and improvement activities with the realities of the external environment. This includes industries performing similar functions, geographically separated businesses, and non-profit or public institutions. Direct competitors can even perform benchmarking under the right conditions, leading to improved performance that benefits all stakeholders. Benchmarking not only provides awareness of where the “best” performance lies but, more importantly, it helps create a paradigm shift that internally focused teams may sometimes fail to achieve. It fosters the creative adoption and adaptation of “best” practices, assisting organizations in gaining and maintaining a competitive advantage.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course on achieving performance excellence through benchmarking, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of performance measurement and how it contributes to performance excellence.
- Set up an effective performance measurement system for shared services.
- Interpret performance measurement results to determine whether processes are ready for improvement.
- Learn the necessary actions to take when processes are not yet ready for improvement.
- Understand the principles of continuous improvement and how to apply them to enhance process performance.
- Gain knowledge of benchmarking, its importance, and how to implement successful benchmarking projects.
- Identify and implement best practices within the organization, adjusting them where necessary for optimal outcomes.



Course Outlines

Day 1: Performance Measurement: The Starting Point for Improvement

- The Need for Performance Measurement.
- Using Data Constructively: How to avoid misuse of data in performance improvement.
- Methods of Selecting Performance Measures.
- Developing a Framework for Performance Measurement.
- Understanding Variation: Why it is key to evaluating performance.
- Histograms, Run Charts, and Control Charts: What they tell us about performance.
- Case Study: The Rods Experiment for practical understanding of performance variation.

Day 2: Continuous Improvement

- Understanding Variation: Range and standard deviation in process improvement.
- Rods Experiment Part 2: Analyzing results to better understand process variation.
- Improvement vs. Investigation: How to decide whether to improve or analyze a process further.
- Introduction to Control Charts: Tools for taking appropriate actions on process performance.
- The Juran Trilogy: Exploring the fundamentals of continuous improvement.
- How to improve a process: Introduction to the 12-Step Methodology.
- The Power of Teamwork in continuous improvement.

Day 3: The Tools of Continuous Improvement

- Flow Diagrams: Understanding and analyzing a process for improvement.
- Brainstorming: Identifying causes of problems and potential solutions.
- Cause-Effect Diagrams: Demonstrating the link between a cause and its effect.
- Quantitative Display Tools: Using line charts, bar charts, and pie charts for process analysis.
- Pareto Analysis: Selecting the key aspects to focus on for performance improvement.
- Scatter Diagrams and Correlation: Investigating relationships between variables.
- Introduction to Regression: Advanced techniques for performance analysis.

Day 4: Introduction to Benchmarking

- What is benchmarking?
- Why do organizations need to benchmark?
- Benefits of Benchmarking: How benchmarking drives performance excellence.
- The History of Benchmarking and Its Evolution.
- Different methods of benchmarking and their relationships are explored.
- How to identify potential benchmarking projects.
- An overview of the benchmarking process.
- Tips on selecting your first benchmarking project.



Day 5: Running a Successful Benchmarking Project

- Scoping a Benchmarking Study: How to determine what to focus on.
- Planning and resource scheduling for benchmarking projects.
- Normalizing Data: Ensuring comparability across benchmarking partners.
- Selecting benchmarking metrics.
- Identifying and selecting benchmarking partners.
- Securing project support for benchmarking initiatives.
- Inviting organizations to participate in the benchmarking study.
- Data Capture & Analysis: Techniques for efficient data collection and analysis.
- Reporting the results: The starting point for performance improvement.
- Importance of adhering to codes of conduct during benchmarking projects.

Why Attend this Course: Wins & Losses!

This course offers valuable benefits for participants seeking to achieve performance excellence through benchmarking:

- Effective Performance Measurement Strategies: Learn how to implement and utilize a performance measurement system for improved decision-making and performance enhancement.
- Tools for Continuous Improvement: Gain an in-depth understanding of the continuous improvement process and how to apply it effectively in your organization.
- Benchmarking Best Practices: Understand how benchmarking strategies can be used to identify gaps in performance and implement best practices.
- Advanced Analytical Techniques: Learn how to use various performance measurement tools and techniques like Pareto analysis, control charts, and regression analysis.
- Increased Organizational Competitiveness: Learn how benchmarking helps organizations maintain a competitive edge by adapting to industry best practices.
- Real-World Application: Through practical case studies and exercises, you'll gain hands-on experience with continuous improvement and benchmarking in action.
- Improved Performance: Master the techniques for measuring and improving performance in your organization, making substantial progress toward performance excellence.

Conclusion

This course on achieving performance excellence through benchmarking is designed to help organizations implement and improve performance measurement systems, embrace continuous improvement, and apply benchmarking strategies to stay competitive. By understanding and adopting best practices and continuously evaluating and improving processes, organizations can enhance their performance excellence and achieve long-term success. The practical tools and techniques learned will empower you to lead successful benchmarking projects and bring about meaningful performance improvements in your workplace.

